

**FREE
WATER
SQUIRTER!**

LET'S READ TOGETHER

THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS™

Based on the Railway Series by The Rev. W. Awdry.



THE TANK ENGINE
& FRIENDS
THOMAS

FREE
water
squirter!

Supplied by
Matthews Promotional
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Peterborough.



Fill with clean water only.
Do not squirt directly at
eyes. Adult supervision
recommended.

No.284 £1.25
2nd Sept 1998



Puzzles • Reading • Colouring

Hello, everybody!

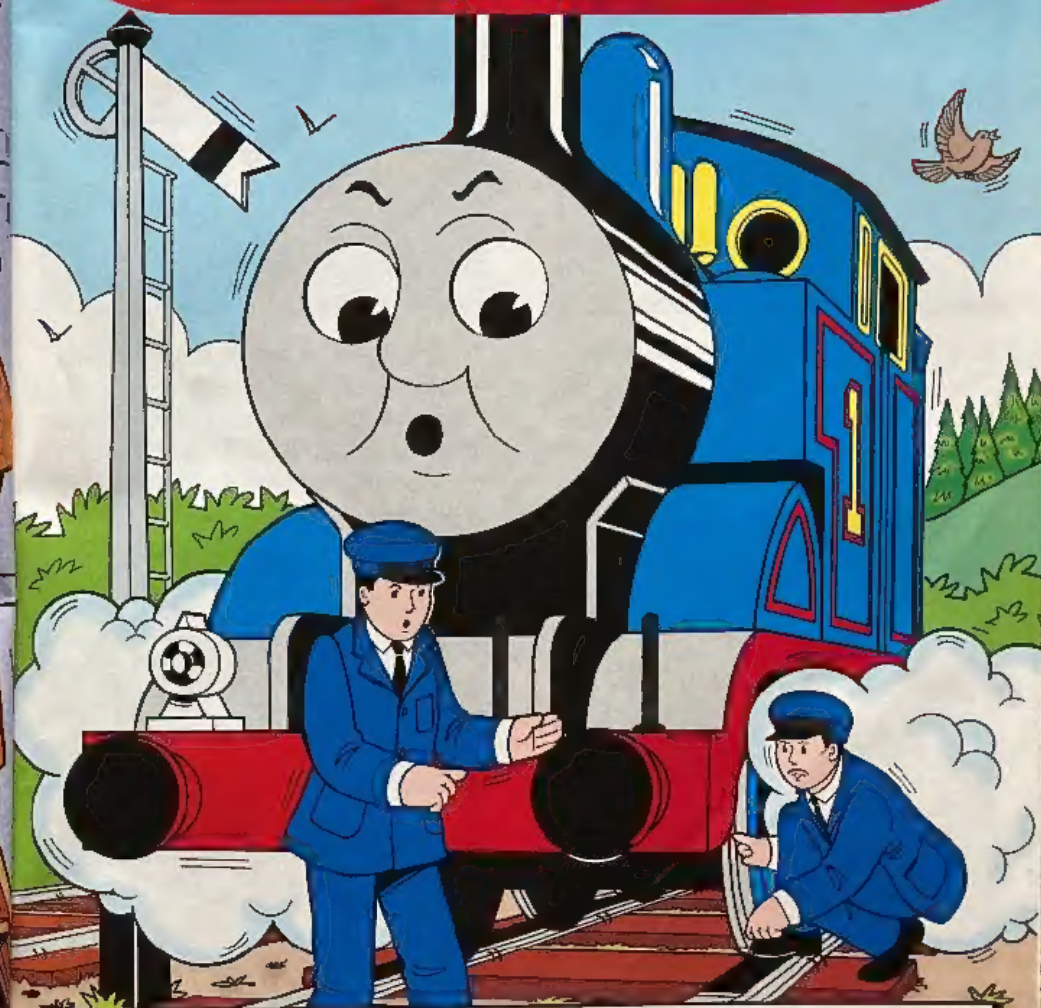
In this issue...

- 3** Double Delay!
- 8** Join the dots!
- 10** The Haunted Bridge!
- 12** The Bookworm!
- 16** Spot the difference!
- 18** Coming & Going!
- 21** Join the Thomas Club!
- 22** James & the Tar Wagons!
- 24** First Engines!
- 29** Competition!
- 30** Mail Train!

Island of Sodor Railway

This comic belongs to

• Double Delay! •



1. Thomas was feeling very gloomy. Work had not been going well. He had broken down several times in as many days and caused bad delays for some of the other busy engines.

2. "First I've got leaking valves and now a broken coupling hook and connecting rod," grumbled Thomas. "What else can go wrong?" He found out when his brakes jammed.



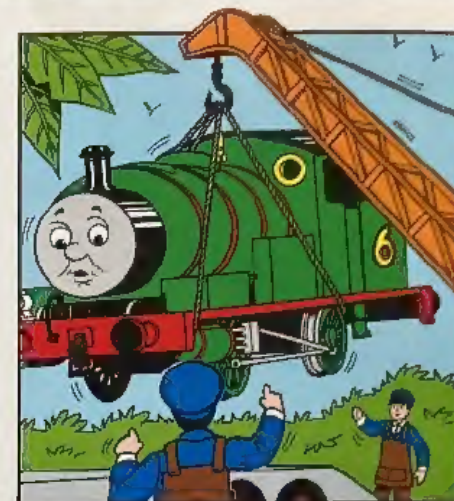
3. Eventually, they were freed and Thomas got underway, but not before he had held up Percy for the second time. Percy was returning from helping out on Edward's line.



4. "Edward's at the works for a big check-up, Thomas," said Percy. "When he's back in service, I'm sure the Fat Controller will want me to look after your branch line, instead!"



7. "You must take care of Edward's branch line tomorrow, too," the Fat Controller told Percy, that evening. "But major track repairs will make it difficult for you to get there."



8. The Fat Controller explained how he had solved the problem. "I will send you by road," he told Percy. So, next morning, Percy was winched up onto the back of a lorry.



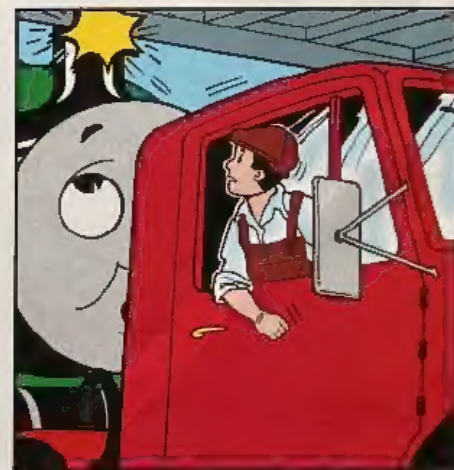
5. "Cheek!" fumed Thomas. "It's not my fault I've run into problems." "None of us will be able to run at all, if you keep on blocking the track," Percy teased him, naughtily.



6. As it happened, Thomas' bad luck ended. He was soon steaming happily along again. But Edward had to stay at the Works a day longer than planned.



9. Percy was tied securely and the lorry drove off. "What an odd way for an engine to travel," thought little Percy. The lorry pulling Percy neared a low bridge over the road.



10. Thomas was puffing along the railway line on top of the bridge. The lorry drove under it. There was suddenly an enormous CLANG! Percy shouted, "I've hit my funnel!"



11. It was jammed into the bridge. The lorry braked urgently and so did Thomas. "We can't go until we're sure the bridge is safe," his driver said, peering from his cab.

12. The lorry could not move, either. More and more cars queued up behind it. The road was blocked. Railwaymen were called to check the bridge and free Percy's funnel.

13. Thomas had to wait. The cars tooted their horns. Soon there was a long traffic jam and the police arrived. At last, the lorry backed up and Thomas could go.

14. Percy's funnel was dented but in one piece. "I only delay engines," Thomas teased red-faced Percy as the lorry set off. "But you've held up the road and rail!"



• The Haunted Tunnel! •

One fine morning, Thomas the tank engine had to get up early to deliver some goods to the other side of the island. "It's a long journey," he told the others, proudly. "And a dangerous one," said sleepy Diesel in an oily voice.

"What do you mean by 'dangerous'!" Thomas replied, looking worried.

"Well, you have got to go through the haunted tunnel by the old farm," Diesel said. "We might never see you again!" he added, with a nasty snigger.

Even though Thomas was usually a brave little engine, Diesel had frightened him. But as he set off, he smiled at the others. He didn't want to look scared!

After a while Thomas began to think that Diesel had been up to

his old tricks again. "He was teasing me!" he laughed to himself. But when Thomas saw the tunnel right in front of him, his wheels shook! "I'll rush under it as quickly as I can," he thought.

As he sped through the tunnel, Thomas heard lots of strange loud noises.

"Diesel's right, it is haunted!" he cried. "I've got to get out of here quick!"

But to poor Thomas' horror he realised that he couldn't go anywhere.

"There's a branch across the track, Thomas," his driver called. "I'll have to get out and move it." "Oh no, you mustn't," Thomas cried. "It's too dangerous!"

His driver was puzzled. "What on earth do you mean, Thomas?" his driver asked. "The tunnel is

haunted! Can't you hear those awful noises?" Thomas puffed. His driver began to chuckle. "That's an echo," he laughed. "The tunnel repeats every sound it hears. Listen." Thomas' driver whistled. Then the tunnel whistled too. Then he clapped his hands and the tunnel made a clapping sound.

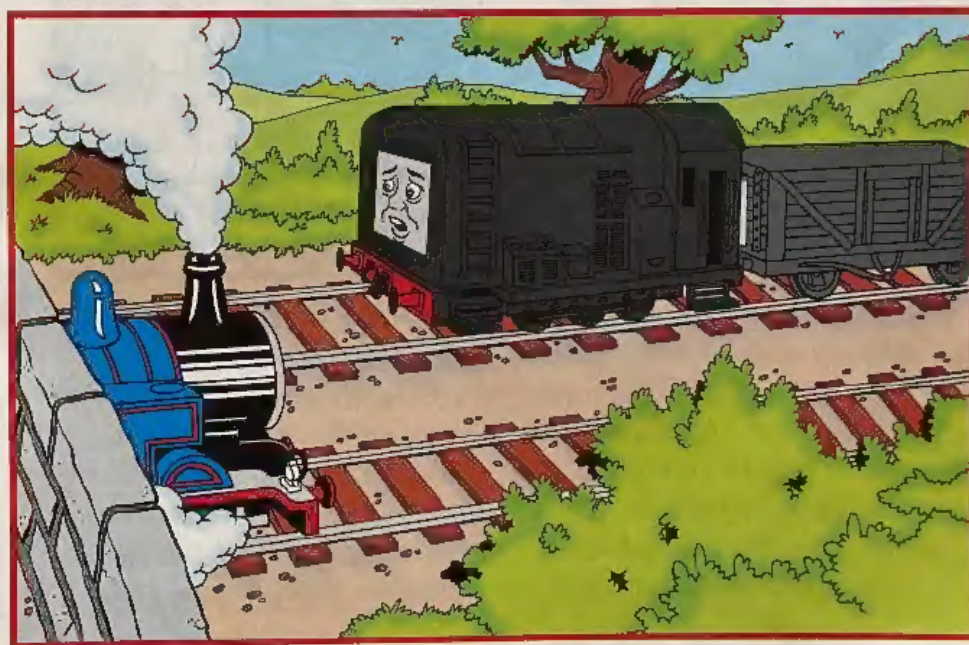
Well, Thomas wasn't frightened anymore. He thought the tunnel could be quite fun! Thomas made some sounds and the tunnel echoed them.

Soon the driver had moved the branch and they were ready to go. "Can I make one last noise for the tunnel to echo?" Thomas asked. His driver agreed so Thomas let out a loud whistle and the tunnel

echoed it back.

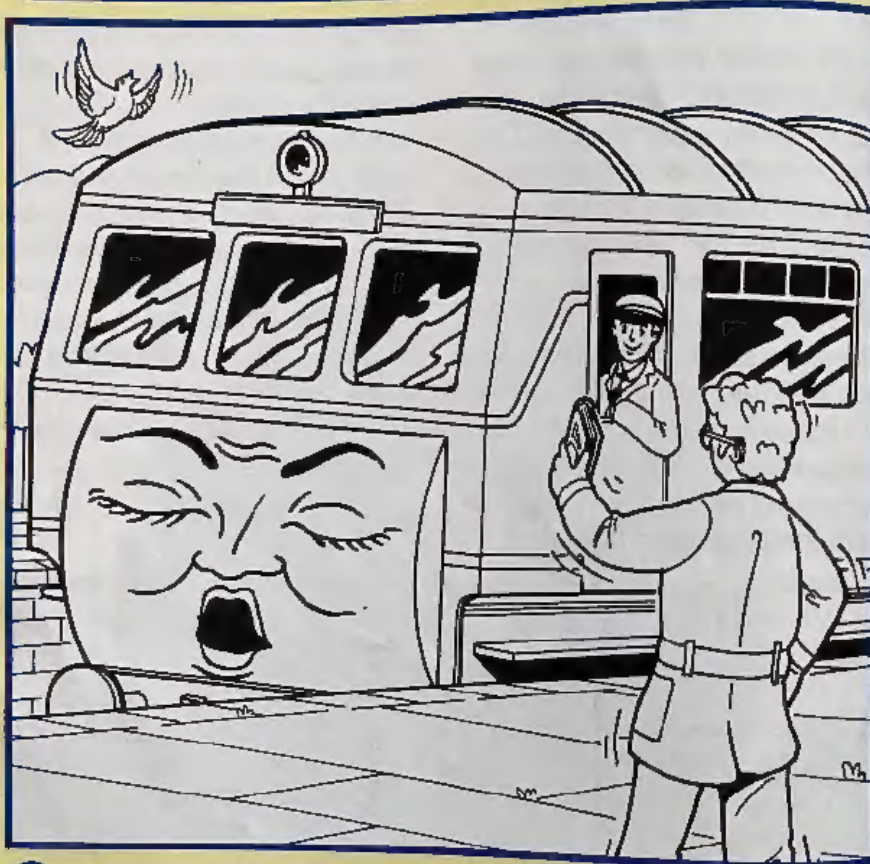
Diesel, who was heading towards the tunnel on another track, heard the echo and was terrified. "I'm not going into that tunnel!" he said, braking so quickly he bumped his trucks. His driver was quite cross!

Thomas laughed when he came out of the tunnel and saw Diesel trembling on the track afraid to go into the tunnel. "What's wrong Diesel, you're not scared to go through the tunnel are you?" he shouted. "Are you afraid that you might not come out again?" Thomas peeped cheekily at silly Diesel!



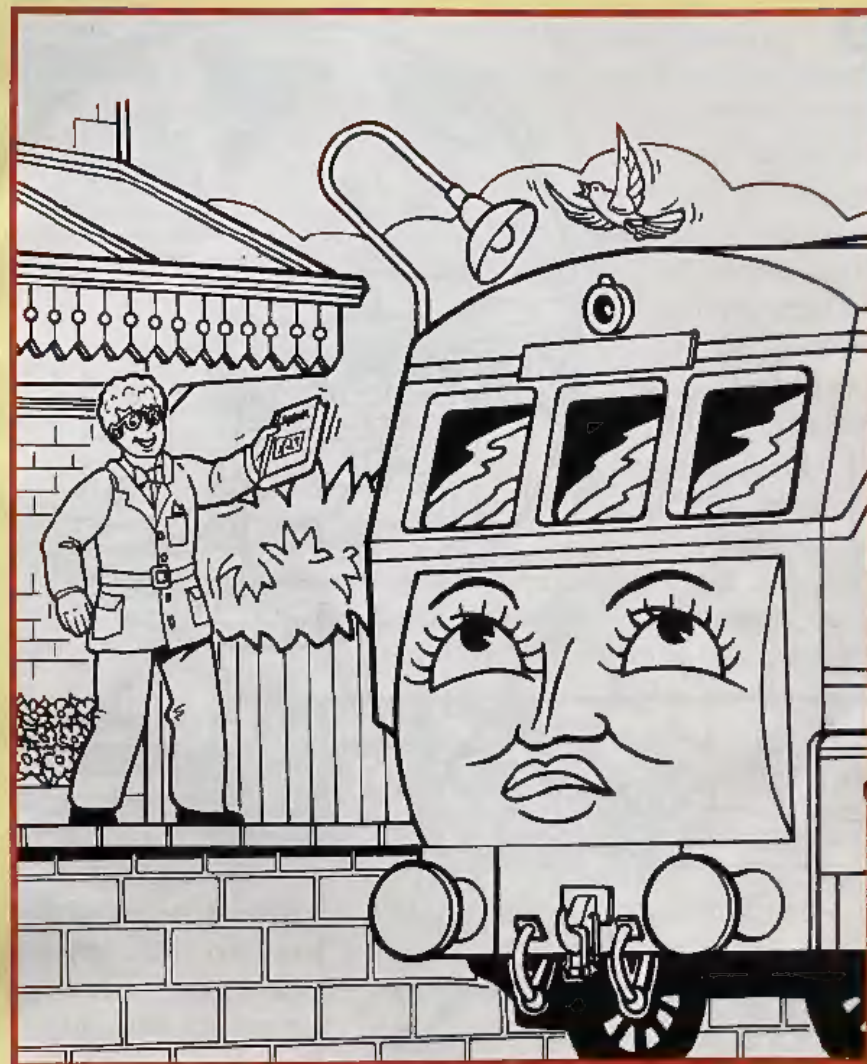
A read & colour story

The Bookworm!



1 One morning, Daisy stopped at a station in the country. There was only one person on the platform and he was so interested in his book that he didn't notice her! Daisy likes to be noticed so she gave him a toot! The

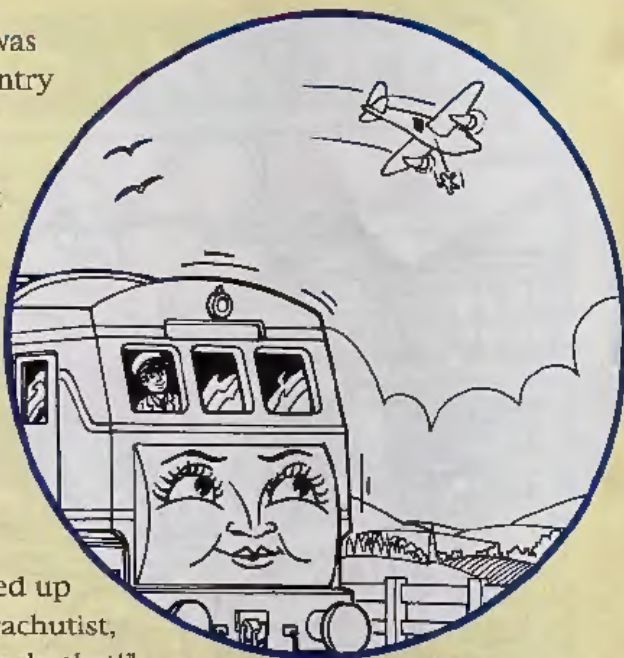
man jumped up. "I'm sorry!" he said. "I'm a bit of a bookworm and I've just finished this book. I'm going to the library to find another one!" Daisy's driver told her, "A bookworm is someone who spends a lot of time reading!"



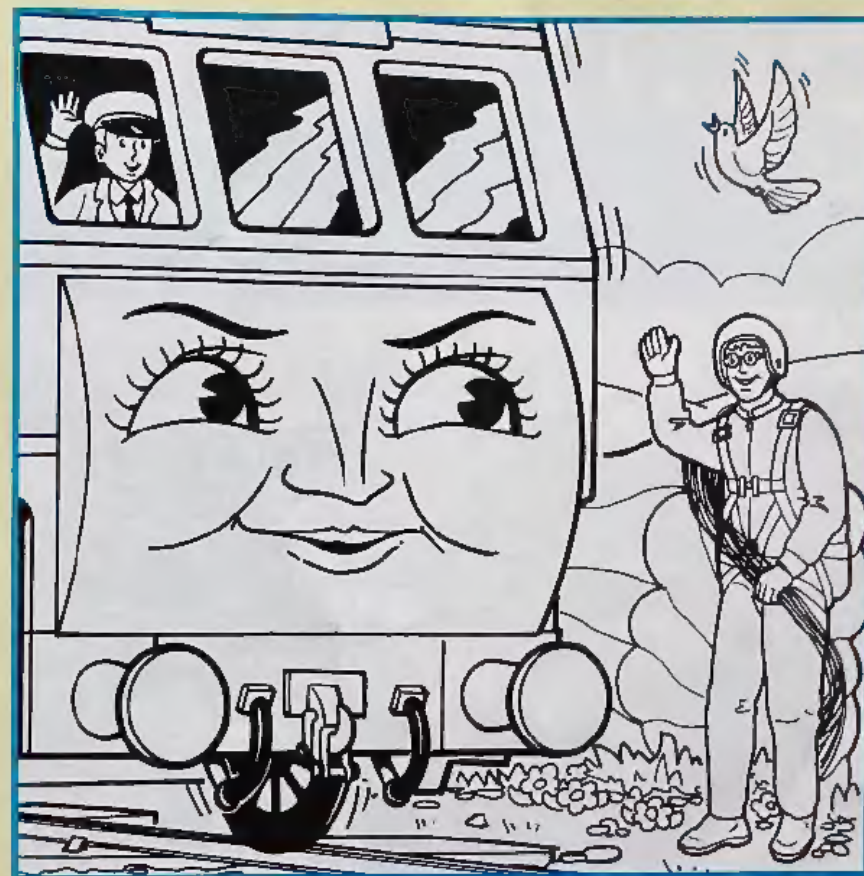
2 At the Main Station Daisy's driver called to the bookworm, "I hope you find a good book, sir!" Later, the same man boarded again and

said excitedly, "Terrific! They had the book I really wanted!" Daisy muttered to herself, "How can anyone be so excited about a book?"

3 Next day, Daisy was chugging along a country line when she saw an aeroplane high up in the distance. "Look at that!" she exclaimed, "How wonderful to be right up there looking down on the island!" She stared at the plane as it got nearer and suddenly tooted, "Something's fallen out!" Her driver looked up and called, "It's a parachutist, Daisy! I wouldn't dare do that!"



4 As the colourful parachute opened up Daisy was wide-eyed! "What a daredevil! I'd love to meet him!" she hooted. Her driver replied, "He's going to land near the railway." A minute later, just up the line, he landed with the parachute covering him. "Here's your chance to meet a really exciting person, Daisy!"



5 As Daisy reached the parachute, a man came out from underneath! She tooted loudly. The man grinned and said, "That was amazing!" Daisy looked at the man and couldn't believe her eyes, "Haven't I seen you somewhere before?" she asked. The man exclaimed,

"Of course! You took me to the library. That book I borrowed was about parachuting!" Daisy's driver joined in, "You see, Daisy, there's nothing dull about reading books, they're full of exciting ideas!" Daisy beamed, "I should say! What's your next book going to be, sir?"

The end

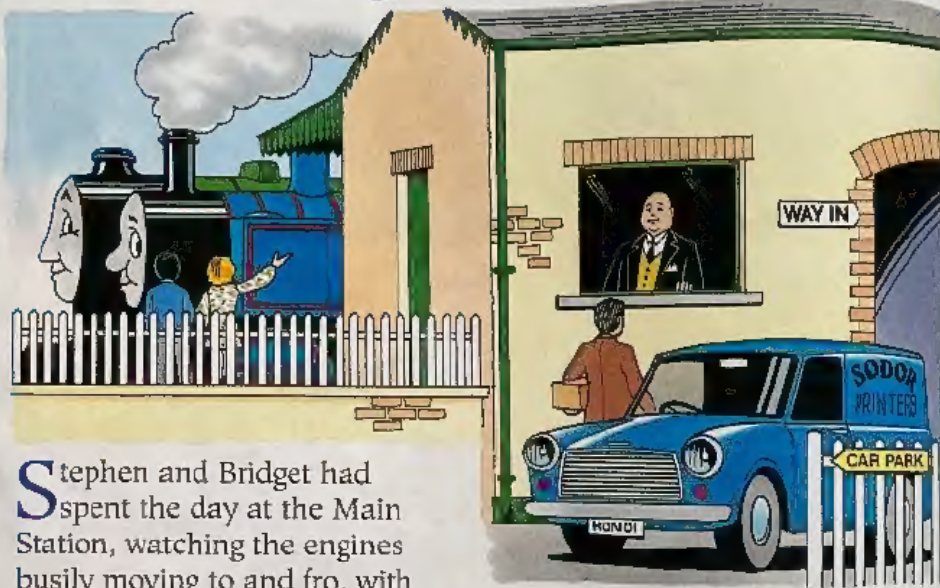
Spot the difference!

These two pages may look the same, but there are some tiny differences between them! Can you spot the 5 changes? When you have found them all, colour in the pictures!



Answers: Toby's number, Toby's driver, Toby's limp, Toby's buffer, Henrietta's coupling hook

Coming and going!



Stephen and Bridget had spent the day at the Main Station, watching the engines busily moving to and fro, with trucks or carriages. Just as they finished work, a van pulled up in the car park. The driver brought a parcel for the Fat Controller. "Good! I've been waiting for this," he told Stephen and Bridget



when the driver left. "Be Really Useful children and ask all the engines' crews to come see me in my office."

Minutes later, everyone arrived. The Fat Controller opened the parcel and took out copies of a timetable that had just been printed. Stephen and Bridget helped hand them round. "It took me a long time to prepare the new timetable," the Fat Controller told his grandchildren later, on the way home. "But it's very important my engines know exactly what they should be doing at any time of day, or my railway would not run efficiently!"



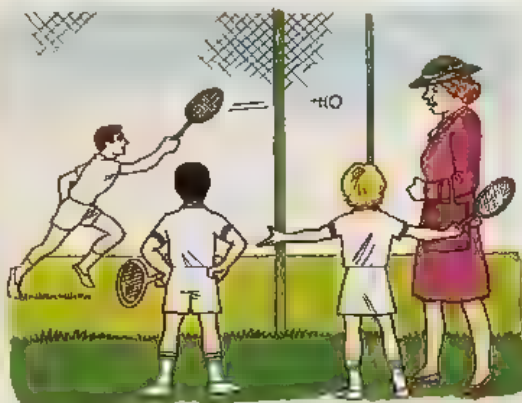
Lady Hatt greeted the children as they entered the front door. "I thought you two were going to help me collect some old books, this afternoon, for the church jumble sale," she smiled patiently at her grandchildren. "Oops! Sorry Grandma! We forgot," said Bridget. "I've just remembered," cried Stephen. "We're supposed to see a nature film at the church hall, this evening. The vicar will

collect us later."

Stephen and Bridget ate their dinner then quickly got ready. They waited and waited. But the vicar did not arrive. Puzzled, Lady Hatt rang the vicarage. "It's the wrong day. The film is tomorrow afternoon," the vicar explained to her. "But we can't go then. We're going to a birthday party tomorrow," said Stephen. "No, that's the day after, I think," added Bridget, fetching the invitation. "Look! I'm right!" "Upon my word!" laughed the Fat Controller. "I'm certainly glad you're not engines or my railway would be in an awful muddle. You two don't seem to know if you're coming or going."

Next day, when the Fat Controller went to work, the two children stayed behind. "We're





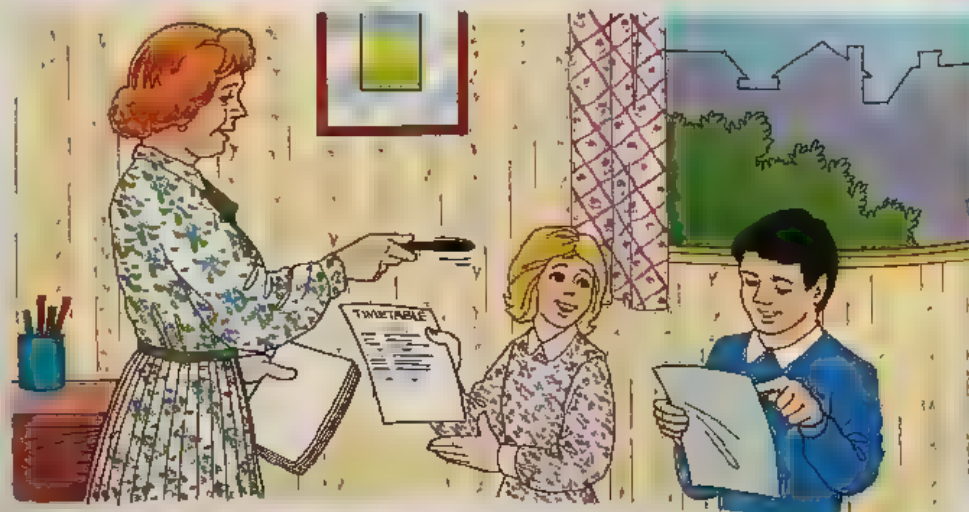
playing tennis with friends at ten o'clock," said Stephen. "And we've got a badminton lesson this afternoon," added Bridget.

The pair put on plimsolls, and got their tennis rackets. Lady Hatt saw her grandchildren safely across the road to the tennis courts in a park. But there were only adults playing at that time. "That's odd. Our friends must be late," frowned Stephen.

"Oh, no!" cried Bridget. "We're early! We've mixed up the times for our sports today. We're just too busy to remember anything!" "There's only one answer," smiled Lady Hatt.

When they got home their grandma asked them to think about the things they had to do each day, for the whole week. She wrote everything down, including the times and days, on two pieces of paper for the children. "Your grandpa's railway gave me the idea," smiled Lady Hatt. "Just pretend you're engines!" "Clever Grandma," laughed Stephen and Bridget. "Our very own timetables!"

THE END



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THE THOMAS CLUB

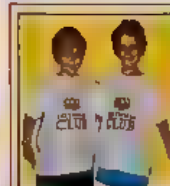
Peep! Peep! Sir Topham Hatt here...
Are you a loyal friend of my Number One Engine? Then you'll love The Thomas Club.

In your welcome pack you will receive:

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£4.99

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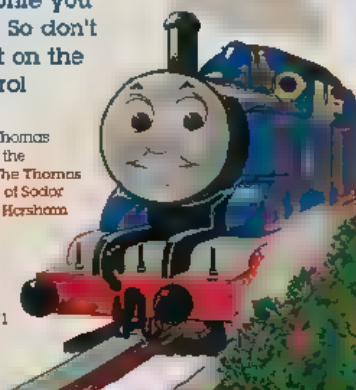
Choose from ages 3-4, 5-6 and 7-8
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James and the Tar Wagons!

Based on *The Railway Series* by the Rev. W. Awdry.

Toby and Henrietta look very old-fashioned. They were shabby and needed new paint when they first came, and James was rude whenever he saw them. "Ugh! What dirty objects!" he would say.



2 This stops the truck pushing the engine too far as they go down the hill. But James did not stop. He was too busy thinking about what he would say to Toby next time. The trucks laughed as they pushed James down the hill. They thundered through the station and into the yard.



1 One day James had to take a slow goods train. "Dirty trucks from dirty sidings," he grumbled. One made the tracks cross so they decided to pay him back. They reached the top of a big hill. Heavy goods trains must stop at the top so that the guard can put down their brakes.



3 There was a crash and something sticky splashed all over James. He had run into two tin wigons. Toby and Percy came to help clean up the mess. "Look! Percy!" said Toby. "Whatever is that dirty object?" "I think that's James covered in rain," replied Percy.

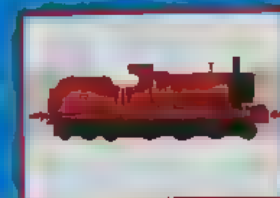
4 "But James is a splendid red engine and you never see his paint dirty." James pretended not to hear Toby. The Fat Controller came and thanked Percy and Toby. He said to James, "You're not fit to be seen; you must be cleaned at once." Then he said to Toby, "You shall have a new coat of paint for being so helpful."



In Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends next time, you can read the story "A Close Shave!"

Win a model of James!

Five lucky winners can win a splendid model of James from the ERTL engine range.
Just send a postcard addressed to:
James, Panqui House, Coach and Horses Passage
The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ.
Closing date 31st September 1998.

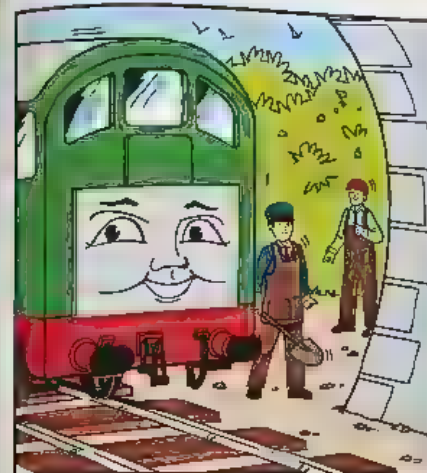


First Engines!

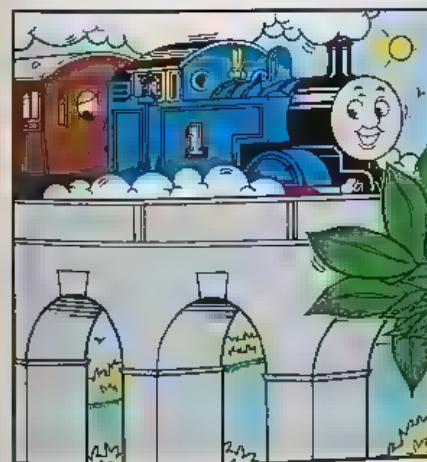


1. For a long time, workmen had been busy making improvements to the Fat Controller's railway. Now there were more lines to give people an even better service.

2. How James glowed with pride as he pulled the first passenger train through a new cutting. The Mayor was on board. "Pheep! Look at me!" James whistled, boastfully.



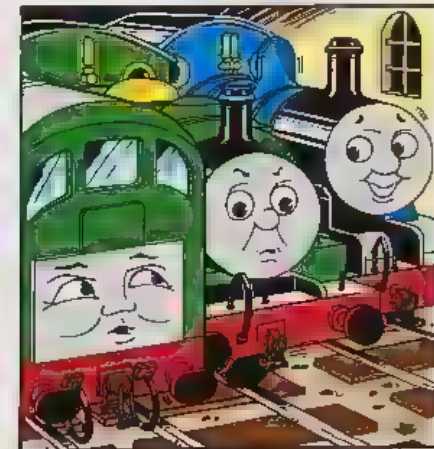
3. Later, it was BoCo's turn to fee. Really Useful when he was the first engine into a new tunnel. "It's very long and dark," he thought. But BoCo was proud to have the job.



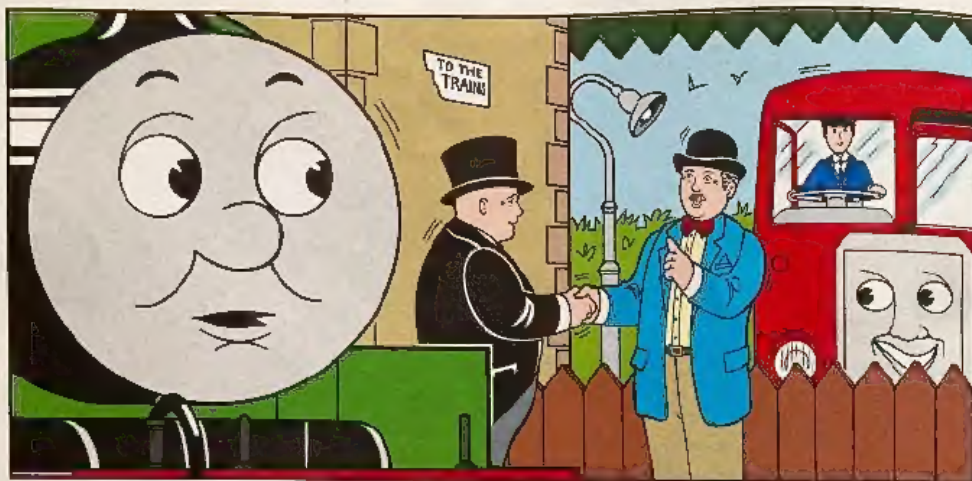
5. But, shortly afterwards, Thomas had his chance to be first, too, as he huff-puffed onto a viaduct that had just been rebuilt. Eventually, all the special work came to an end.



4. The next month, Gordon took the Express over a new bridge. "It's only right the Fat Controller wanted me to use it first," he said. "I'm the biggest, most important engine!"



6. "It's not fair," Percy sulked, one evening in the shed. "I wanted to be the first to do something!" In the morning, he was taken out of service to be washed and polished.

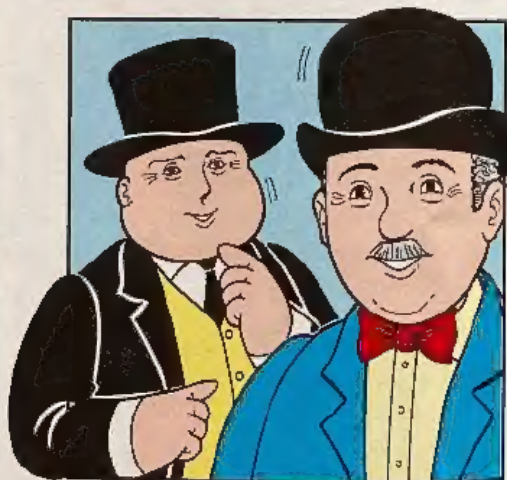


7. "You'll be the first engine to do nothing today," teased James. "Very funny!" hissed Percy. While he was left alone in the yard, a visitor arrived on Bertie the Bus.

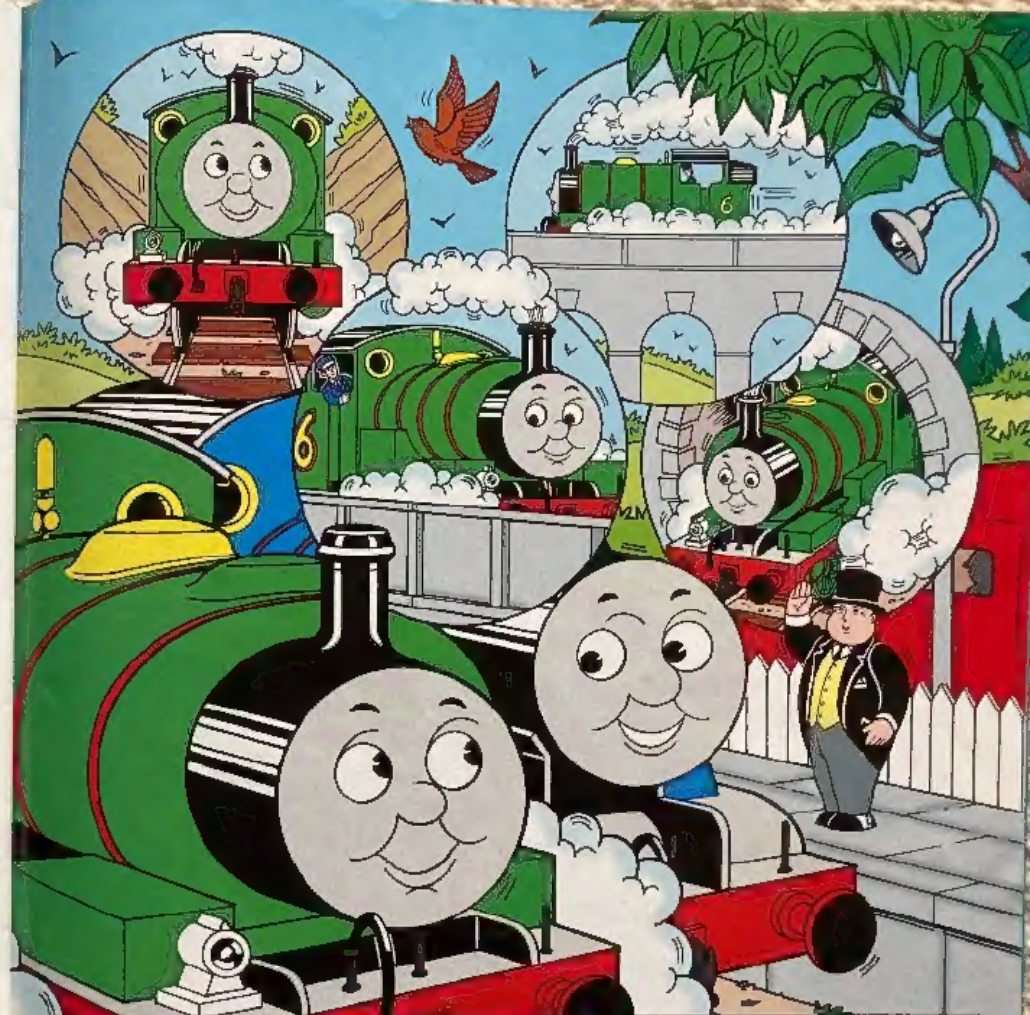
8. The man was an inspector from a large railway on the Mainland. "I've heard all about your Really Useful Railway," he told the Fat Controller. "So I've come to see it for myself."



9. The inspector had to get back to the Mainland that night so he didn't have much time. "But all my engines are busy," said the Fat Controller. "I'm not!" called Percy.



10. The Fat Controller had forgotten about him. "Please, sir! Can I show the inspector our railway?" asked Percy. "Of course!" replied the Fat Controller, and Percy got underway.

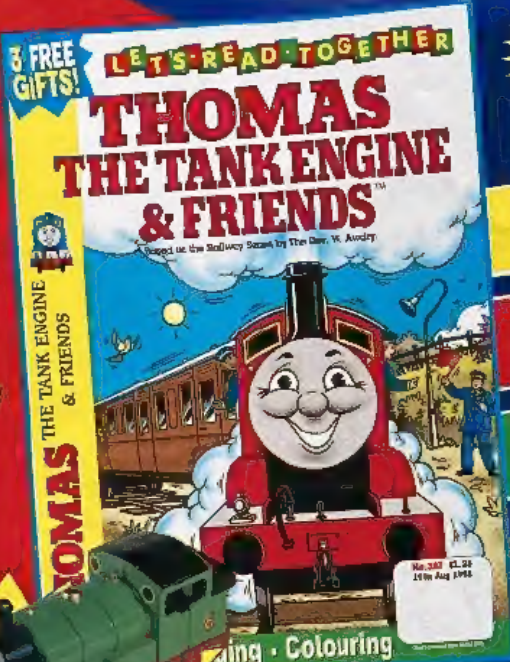


11. The Fat Controller went too. Percy steamed busily from line to line. On his journey, he puffed through the new cutting. Then he rolled on to another track and went over the new bridge. It was very high but Percy did not mind at all. Next, he raced into the new tunnel. Percy was not a bit nervous about being in the dark. He was much too pleased to have such useful work.

12. Finally, Percy crossed the viaduct before returning to the Main Station. "A splendid railway, Fat Controller," said the inspector, before leaving. "And a fine little engine!" he went on, pointing to Percy. "I wasn't the first to use the bridge, cutting, viaduct and tunnel," Percy happily told Thomas, later. "But I was the first engine to use them all on the same day!"

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**To win this super
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set just tell us:
What colour are
Thomas' stripes?**

Yellow

Red

Blue



Heart Character Toys stock over 200 Thomas products in their mail order catalogue. For your FREE copy, telephone 01543 377182, quoting form 284 or write to them at the competition address below.

Write your answer on a postcard along with your name, age and address to: Thomas/School competition, Heart Character Toys, 37a High Street, Walsall Wood, W. Midlands, WS9 9LR.

All entries must be received by 9th September 1998.

This competition is open to all readers other than employees and their families of participating companies. We cannot accept any responsibility for prices lost or damaged in the post. One edition of an advertisement shall be entered into.



The mail train!

Please send your letters, pictures and drawings to Mail Train, Thomas, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ.

Star Letter

Dear Fat Controller,
Thomas and his friends all go to sleep in the engine shed after being Really Useful at the end of the day, but where does Bertie the Bus and Harold the Helicopter go to sleep? Do they have a shed to go to sleep in?

Victorio Gunn, aged 3.

After a day of very important work Bertie goes back to the depot to rest with the other buses. Harold goes to sleep in the airport hangar with the aeroplanes!



If we print your STAR LETTER, you will receive a wooden playtrack from BRIO as a prize!

This picture of pretty Daisy the Diesel is by Scott Midgeley who is 3½ years old!



Prize Poem!

Matthew Green, aged 3, has written this exciting poem about Thomas and Bertie!

Thomas and Bertie had a race,
They both set off at quite a pace,
Thomas took a while to get up speed,
So at the start Bertie had the lead,
Thomas beat the bus in the end,
And now they are the best of friends!

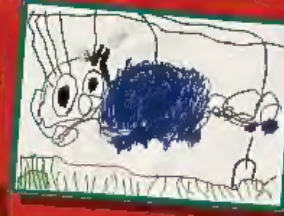


Anyone who has a drawing printed on this page will win a special Thomas Kaleidoscope!

Sammy Harling, aged 3½, has drawn a picture of Thomas and the breakdown crane!



Yash Bedi is 6 years old and sent in this super picture of James!



Thank you to 5 year old Steven Williams for this marvellous picture of Rheneas!



Happy Birthday!

To
Tony Rushworth, aged 3,
Jareth Maloney, aged 2,
Tristan Bennett, aged 3,
& Stephen Drennen, aged 5!

Also to
Simon Gobels, aged 6,
Anna Ashworth, aged 2,
& Benjamin Lawrence, aged 7!

Remember to send in your birthday details 3 months before your birthday!



Matthew McConnell, aged 6!

Jack Haynes, aged 4!



Brady Mould, aged 4!

Zander Orvis, aged 2!



Andrew Vickers, aged 2½!

Ben Stephens, aged 3!





“Peep! Peep! Here comes the train!
And into the tunnel it goes!”

THE new Thomas the Tank Engine range of yogurts and fromages fraîs are loaded up with all the right goodies, and that includes vitamins and calcium for growing bones and teeth.

Made from whole milk and pure, smooth natural fruit purée, they make the perfect first foods for young Thomass, Henry's, Annie's and Clarabel's everywhere. Mummy will be chuffed.



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